

with the EIT in a spirit of teamwork and cooperation. The EIT will provide an important resource to the Contractor throughout the implementation phase and help insure success. Bidders shall consider the EIT in preparing the Project Management Plan.

3.1.3 California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

CDSS is the designated EBT Project sponsor. CDSS will participate as a full partner with HWDC and the counties during all phases of the project life cycle. CDSS will also participate as a member of the EBT Committee. It is the responsibility of CDSS to ensure that all program policies are implemented and program goals are met. CDSS is the point of contact for Federal and State agencies and the State Legislature regarding EBT program policy issues.

3.1.4 County Welfare Departments (CWD)

Each county welfare department (CWD) will be responsible for county-level project management, including monitoring milestones, activities, timelines, resources, budgets and critical path; implementation; and operations. The CWD responsibilities include providing the Contractor with an understanding of the CWD's business needs during the general system design; serving as testers during all testing phases; providing training support; and coordinating the conversion and implementation process.

3.1.5 EBT Committee

AB 1542 established the EBT Committee in order to advise HWDC and CDSS on the development and implementation of a statewide EBT system. Membership on the EBT Committee, as delineated by legislation, is comprised of the major stakeholders in California EBT, including representatives of various State offices and departments, the State Assembly, the State Senate, various county associations, the banking and retail industries, and representatives of the recipients who will use the system.

3.2 Program Organization

In California, the Food Stamp Program (FSP), California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA/ECA) are administered by 58 CWDs pursuant to guidelines and regulatory mandates issued by CDSS, in compliance with State and Federal laws and regulations. For the federal FSP, CDSS directives conform to the regulations of Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

General Assistance (GA), also known as General Relief (GR), is a state-mandated program, but is fully county administered and funded. Eligibility requirements and grant amounts vary from county to county.

Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) is a 100 percent state-funded program designed to provide monthly cash benefits to aged, blind, and disabled immigrants who are ineligible for SSI/SSP solely due to their immigrant status.

3.3 Food Stamp Program Operations

The Food Stamp Program (FSP) is a food assistance program governed by FNS, which helps low-income people buy the food they need for good health. Food Stamp recipients receive benefits monthly and meet at least one of the following eligibility criteria: work for low wages, are unemployed or work part time, receive welfare or other assistance payments, or are homeless. FNS establishes national FSP policies and authorizes food retailers to accept the FSP

benefits as payment from customers. FNS monitors retailers' program compliance and investigates retailers suspected of fraudulent activities. Food Stamps cannot be used to buy the following: alcoholic beverages; tobacco or cigarettes; household supplies, soaps, and paper